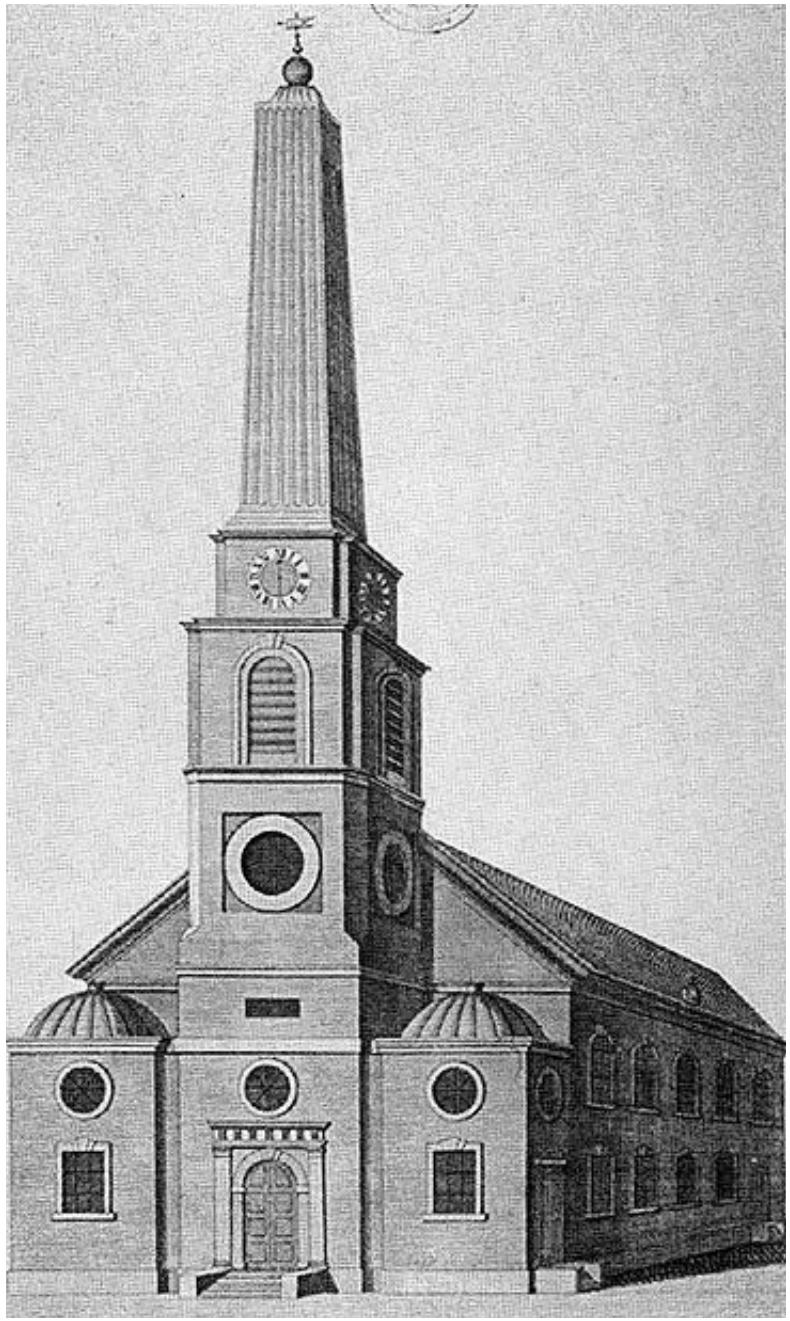

# ST LUKE'S, OLD STREET
## CONSERVATION PLAN

PREPARED BY

PURCELL MILLER TRITTON

FEBRUARY 2000

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Although St Luke's has been closed and semi-ruinous for many years its long history is well recorded in primary and secondary sources and this rich historical data relates well to the building fabric and its churchyard which still survives.

The architectural importance due to links with Hawksmoor and John James is now well established, but there are numerous other reasons why the site has a high heritage and cultural value. St Luke's has a history which is well documented and its association with parishioners and vestrymen such as George Dance I, the City Surveyor, and William Caslon, the famous typographer and the book designer, and Henry Smart, the composer, forms an integral part of London's heritage.

## ESSENTIAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE SITE

AD 1010 King Edmund the Martyr's body rested at Cripplegate, where miracles were observed.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1090 | St Giles Cripplegate Church in existence. |
| 1390 | St Giles Cripplegate Church rebuilt in present form and remained undamaged in 1666 in Great Fire of London. |
| 1711 | 50 New Churches Act passed. |
| 1718 | Site for new church of St Luke's in North of parish acquired. |
| 1727 | Building work started at St Luke's. |
| 1732 | St Luke's vestry instituted and Act of Parliament to create new parish obtained. |
| 1733 | St Luke's completed, furnished and inaugurated. The internal appearance of the church with these furnishings is recorded in old photographs kept at St Giles Cripplegate. |

As a managed 'ruin with a history' of structural defects and set within a public open space this building, which is of great heritage merit, is extremely vulnerable to the risk of vandalism, arson, lack of maintenance and other forms of physical neglect. Due to its state it is also vulnerable to a lack of historical understanding and cultural appreciation.

St Luke's Management Company have proposed a secular development to convert the building into a Music Education Centre for the London Symphony Orchestra which if carried out sensitively will undoubtedly reduce the risk to the building and vastly increase the awareness, understanding and appreciation of the site.

Purcell Miller Tritton (Historic Building Consultants) have been commissioned by St Luke's Management Co to produce this Conservation Plan which will provide a multi-level framework of understanding within which any proposals can be evaluated and the maintenance and repair of the building fabric can be appropriately planned.

Section 2.0 of the plan generally assesses the heritage merit and makes statements of the historical and cultural significance.

Section 3.0 provides a more detailed understanding of the historic site.

Section 4.0 establishes the value of and risk to each area and element of the building and identifies and defines the conservation issues.

Section 5.0 provides conservation policy and guidance which addresses these issues and which following wide consultation is adopted by St Luke's Management Co and will be implemented by them to protect this historic and cultural asset.

# 2.0 GENERAL ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENTS OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

## 2.1 SITE AND ORIGINS

St Luke's Church has its origins in an Act of Parliament of 1732 which altered the boundaries of the ancient London parish of St Giles Cripplegate. The latter church stands by the City walls but its parish stretched northwards into the scattered developments and suburban fields towards Islington and Shoreditch.

St Giles parish had been sub-divided into "the Freedom" or "Cripplegate Within", inside the boundaries of the City, and the "Lordship" or "Cripplegate Without", which formed part of the County of Middlesex. It was this Lordship area which became the new parish of St Luke in 1732.

The land on which St Luke's stands was purchased from the Ironmonger's Company as early as 1718. It was a marshy site in all probability and reports exist that early foundation works begun in 1727 required underpinning. Evidence of any previous buildings on the church site itself would have been disturbed or destroyed by such works although archaeological evidence of buildings on the churchyard may still exist (refer to 3.1.6 below). Construction appears to have lasted from 1727 to the official consecration on St Luke's Day, 18 October 1733 and (according to the recorded payments) the building was also internally furnished by this date.

**The site has historical significance which is documented certainly since the 16th century and the surrounding areas if not the church itself is likely to contain remains of the built archaeology.**

## 2.2 ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The main facts about the building of the parish church of St Luke's, Old Street, 1727-33, are summarised in an article by Kerry Downes (*Country Life*, September 8 1960). The leading scholar on Hawksmoor wrote this piece at the time of a threat to demolish all of the church except for its West Tower and spire. The church was in the process of being closed for worship, with the parish being re-united with St Giles, Cripplegate nearby (from which it had originally been created over 200 years earlier).

Downes refers in 1960 to the discovery "a few years ago" of papers in Lambeth Palace Library identifying Hawksmoor as co-architect of St Luke's. Up to this time most writers had guessed the church to be by George Dance the Elder, City of London Surveyor and active as a designer of churches in and around London about 1730.

The Lambeth Palace discovery enabled Downes:

a) to place St Luke's as "one of the last of the dozen Queen Anne churches to be built under the Fifty New Churches Act of 1711; it was begun in 1727 and finished by 1733, at the same time as St John, Horsleydown, which stood until the blitz outside London Bridge Station …"

b) to show that the "joint architects of both buildings were Nicholas Hawksmoor and John James, the Commission's surveyors."

This information formed part of the important publication in 1959 of a full length study of *Hawksmoor* by Kerry Downes. It replaced the previous study of 1924 by H.S. Goodhard-Rendel.

Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736) is now well known as a leading disciple of Wren and, together with Vanbrugh, as a principal exponent of the English Baroque. His reputation has spread round the world and he is one of the small group of architects of English birth to be universally cited even in foreign reference books, dictionaries of art and architecture, etc..

Since Downes first wrote the reputation of Hawksmoor has grown even further. His designs are highly original and of an uncompromising grandeur. His surviving work is rare with so much having been destroyed or reduced to fragments. The location of some of his buildings (notably St George in the East and Christ Church, Spitalfields) in suburban districts of London have combined to create for Hawksmoor a "cult status". This has enhanced the status of St Luke's despite the fact that the precise role of Hawksmoor in its creation has been uncertain in the past.

**It can therefore be stated that, although the future of St Luke's was in doubt when Downes first wrote in 1960, the rise in the reputation of Hawksmoor in the intervening time has greatly increased the significance of this structure at the close of the 20th Century. St Luke's now "is considered to be one of the most important buildings at risk by English Heritage" (Executive Summary, paragraph 3). Completed only three years before Hawksmoor's death, St Luke's represents both a final example of his work and of a Queen Anne church.**

The documents discovered at Lambeth Palace also reveal the participation of famous master craftsmen (refer to 2.5 below) in addition to the involvement of Hawksmoor's fellow architect, John James.

John James (1672-1746) had begun his career in the works at St Paul's Cathedral and subsequently at Greenwich Hospital alongside Hawksmoor (his senior by 11 years) and the two men were appointed jointly as Surveyors to the Fifty New Churches Commission. At St Alphege's Church, Greenwich, James added a tower to Hawksmoor's building which, together with St John's, Horsleydown as well as St Luke's, is part of a small group of sites where their work jointly appears side by side.

In the absence of original designs for the building, and with the known documents in fact giving only the merest of clues, detailed analysis of the authorship of St Luke's rests upon informed opinion and reasoning.

The sobriety of the design of the main body of St Luke's and the overall appearance of the interior (as it once was) both suggest the authorship of James for these elements. Comparison is made here with St George's Church, Hanover Square, the principal complete surviving church design by John James built 1721-25, just before the commencement of St Luke's.

The striking addition of the obelisk/spire at the West end of the St Luke's, however, suggests to most minds the contribution of Hawksmoor. It would appear that the invention of the obelisk might indeed have come from Hawksmoor, not James, as it seems typical of the former, but not typical of the latter. It is one of the most unforgettable landmarks in London and it also seems to play a part in what is known, or can be guessed, about Hawksmoor's interest in scenic effects and in the creation of cultural references to classical antiquity.

**The Tower and Steeple, the Entrance Vestibule and the Staircase Halls have a high architectural significance because they are a unique example of this particular architectural composition by an important architect and have a high urban design profile as a landmark. The ruinous church is of lesser significance as other examples have survived in a more complete condition although what does survive is of great historical importance. The structure in its present state is highly vulnerable as a ruin because of its structural condition and location, and the risk of vandalism. This risk would be lessened considerably if it were sensitively converted and reused, as long as the impact of the alteration on the fabric is kept to a minimum. There is however a cultural and historic value in the understanding of the construction of an 18th century structure that can be appreciated if the building is kept in its present bare state, which would be lost if its church interior was fully restored. The accepted principals of minimum intervention and maximum reversibility are therefore critical in this case to reduce any further loss of the historic fabric and maintain a clear understanding of the history that exists at present.**

## 2.3 ASSOCIATION WITH HISTORIC AND CULTURAL EVENTS

Evidence of the history of St Luke's during the period of more than 200 years during which it was the parish church of a large, highly populated area close to the City of London is beginning to accumulate.

Sources for this history may be found in the Guildhall Library, City of London; at Finsbury Local History Library, St John's Street, EC1 (London Borough of Islington), and in parish registers, census returns etc at Metropolitan Records, Clerkenwell and at the London Borough of Islington.

This history, as recorded in documents, may still also be seen at the site in the churchyard and surviving burial ground to the North (now a much used and well tended public garden) as well as in the St Luke's Schools site. The large parish administered poor relief and basic education to a large population over many years and much of this is already recorded in the **History of St Luke's School** by M. Routledge, 1989.

The musical heritage of St Lukes is of high cultural value, particularly the association with the composer Henry Smart and the innovative rebuilding of the organ in 1843/4.

The original Rectory, the focus for much of the social history, is in Helmet Row near to the N.W. corner of the church. It was originally a handsome *Georgian* House dated 1778 but was altered and extended by Blomfield in 1877/78.

**The building has an important cultural heritage, particularly with regard to architecture and music, and it would be of great benefit if this could continue as the L.S.O. St Lukes Centre.**

## 2.4 COMMUNITY VALUE / PUBLIC AND RECREATIONAL VALUE

With the closure of the church as a place of active Christian worship in the late 1950's and the re-merger of the parish with St Giles, Cripplegate the life of St Luke's as a Church of England parish church ceased. The roof was removed, and the building and its surroundings began a new phase as a "managed ruin". Since 1982 the building has been within the parish of St Clement with St Barnabas and St Matthew, Finsbury with St Barnabas, King Square as the parish church.

During this time, as for example may be seen in the *Independent* 3 October 1994, many schemes have been proposed to demolish the buildings in part or totally or, alternatively, to restore them and reuse them as the present scheme.

The principal scheme to have been carried through to date was the restoration and re-opening of the churchyard, as planned during 1994 and completed soon after.

In fine weather the grounds of the churchyard, now cleared of undergrowth and the plane trees lopped, are a popular retreat in this busy part of Central London for eating lunch, reading the newspaper, relaxing, strolling and generally enjoying being outdoors. Benches are provided as well as well tended lawn.

**This outdoor public space is a valuable amenity which complements and is complemented by the surviving architectural qualities of one of London's most important early Georgian church buildings. The building itself, however, only acts as a backdrop to this amenity space and the public is not able to enjoy the space within the church at present, and the risk of vandalism is high. The vulnerability of the historic fabric would no doubt be reduced if a new use was established and the internal architectural qualities of the building could be enjoyed by the public.**

## 2.5 COLLECTIONS/WORKS OF ART

The main original decorative features of St Luke's were removed when the church was closed in the late 1950's except some fragments of plasterwork and stone carving which survive inside.

Some of 19th Century stained glass may still be seen surviving in the borders of the upper side windows of the church. It is hoped that this can be preserved from further loss, and that its conservation and display on site may play a part in future plans for this building.

The documents (according to Kerry Downes in the 1960 *Country Life* article) indicate that the church was originally decorated by some of the leading names of the time, notably Isaac Mansfield, plasterer. His work also includes the Long Library at Blenheim Palace.

In its prime (as indicated by the internal photographs) St Luke's contained furniture and carving (doors, pews, galleries, pulpit, altarpiece); sculpture (monuments, font); painting (three pictures on the altarpiece); plasterwork; organ (Jordan & Bridge 1733, rebuilt and innovatively altered by Gray & Davison 1843-1844); pavement; ironwork, other metalwork; stained and clear glass.

Primary research in Finsbury Local History Library has begun to reveal the identities of the craftsmen who were responsible for completing the church and its fittings in 1733. The same set of documents also reveal many details of the subsequent redecoration, maintenance and renewal of the fabric and decor during the later 18th century and through the 19th century.

There is a collection of 18th century watercolours in the Guildhall Library. They depict in colour landscape views of the district around the church (whose tower is the centrepiece) with houses, gardens, fields, figures of harvesters etc.

**Although these records are valuable in understanding the detailed cultural and physical history of the church, none of the highly decorative interior features are in situ within the building now except some small fragmentary remnants of the fixtures and decoration and some have been relocated in other buildings under different care. (The organ for example are at St Giles Cripplegate and the Reredos and Altar rails are in the North West Chapel of St Andrews Holborn). Those features that do exist in situ are highly significant and should be retained and conserved. The S.W. stair and entrance vestibule are the most intact interior spaces and their repair, conservation and representation including reinstatement of missing features and decorative finishes should be considered but the sensitive conversion and reuse of the main church and the more damaged N.W. stair is felt to be far more valuable than a full restoration of the church interior (even if this was viable within accepted building conservation principles and financial constraints) or keeping it as managed ruins.**

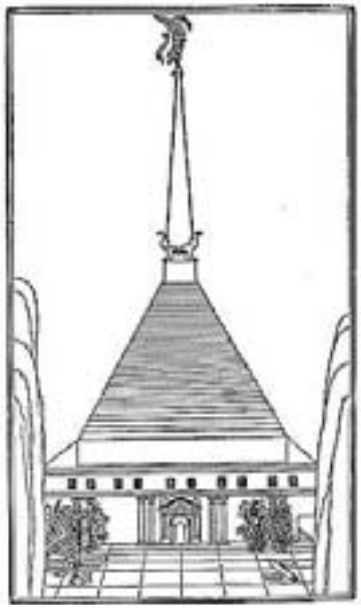
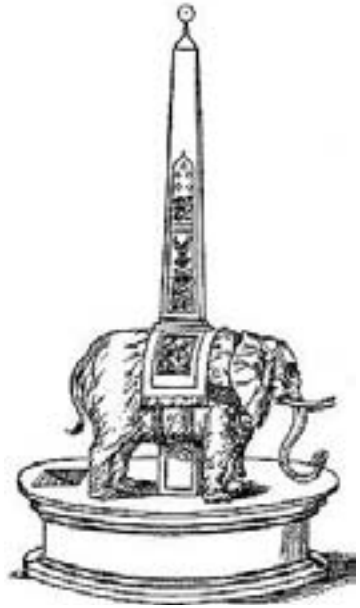


Figure 1



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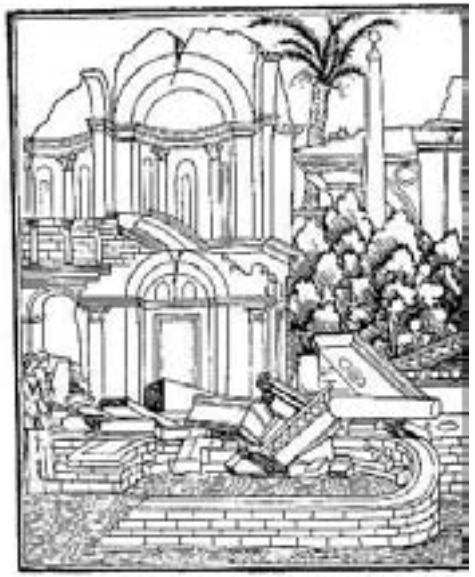

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

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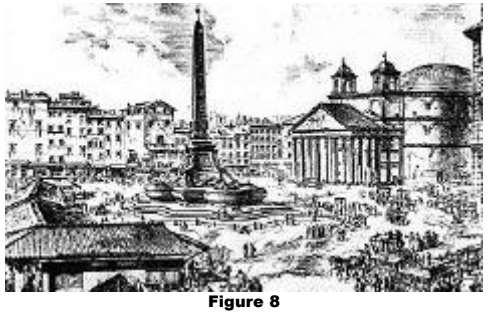

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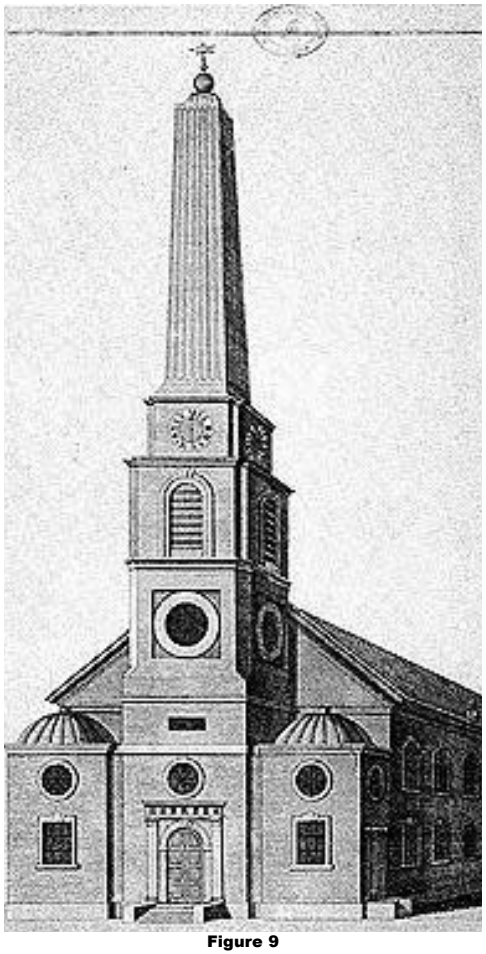

Figure 9

## 2.6 CONTRIBUTION TO TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER

The obelisk of St Luke's, together also with its impressive set of railings round the churchyard form outstanding features of this interesting district outside the City of London's boundaries.

St Luke's may be compared with St Leonard's, Shoreditch or with Hawksmoor's own Christ Church, Spitalfields as an architectural landmark of memorable quality. However, the highly unusual nature of the obelisk spire reminds the viewer of the grounds of Castle Howard, for example, and to find such an evocative architectural feature in a suburban area of a city rather than in a great park, and perched on top of a church is, in the words of Kerry Downes, "a superlative conceit".

**The tower/obelisk spire composition is a unique example of this architectural feature used on an Early Eighteenth Century London church.**

In Ancient Rome such obelisks had been built in monolithic form (not in coursed masonry as at St Luke's) or were transported from Egypt, where this architectural form probably had its origins.

In the Rome of the Popes, from the 16th to the 18th centuries, such obelisks were built again. Hawksmoor is not known to have visited Italy, even though his buildings reflect influences derived from such Roman Baroque buildings as those by Borromini. Hawksmoor would have relied upon books, engravings, and paintings for his knowledge of such features as the Roman obelisks. It was of course an act of architectural eclecticism, not of spontaneous invention.

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, first published in Venice in 1499 and subsequently published in France, had first introduced the motif of the obelisk as an architectural ornament to a wider European public **(figures 1 to 4)**. Wren, Colen Campbell and such are possibly a more immediate provenance.

The map of London by John Rocque, surveyed and engraved in the 1740's shortly after the completion of St Luke's, is the first accurate and large scale representation in a map of the site. It indicated one of the principal characteristics of the tower of St Luke's, and this has not changed in the least today. As you approach the site from the City, by way of the long, and gently curving White Cross Street which leads from St Giles, Cripplegate

**the tower, with obelisk, of St Luke's comes into sight and fixes your view during the final, straight course of the route.**

Now that recent studies of the Baroque have established the importance of notions of architectural scenography within cities (e.g. Rome, Venice, Paris), as well as in the layout of formal gardens and parks, it is clear that the underlying concept of the St Luke's obelisk would have been to create an effect of the same type within the existing matrix of London **(figures 5 to 8)**. The effect described above where the obelisk is seen as you walk north along White Cross Street was not an "accident" but would have been contrived deliberately as a scenographic *coup* according to Baroque theory **(figure 9)**.

It should also be noted that the upper end of White Cross Street and its adjoining areas are a thriving outdoor pedestrian street market and area of small shops and a walk undisturbed by traffic can be made from the South through this district of 18th and 19th housing and shops with St Luke's as the culmination in townscape terms.

In addition, the streets beyond Old Street flanking the church on either side (Helmet Row and Little Mitchell Street) are also traffic free. This extends the pedestrian route well to the North, extending into the Burial Ground garden area and the Ironmongery Row Public Baths and nearby Leisure Centre complex.

Observation during a lunchtime on a sunny week day reveals the great popularity of the market area as well as the churchyard, gardens etc. and the extent to which the pedestrian routes are used as a short cut for local inhabitants and office workers going about their business on foot reinforcing its value as a recreational space (see 2.4 above) but also its contribution to Townscape character.

**The tower and spire are highly significant in townscape terms and the relationship of the church, churchyard, railings, rectory and local pedestrian routes should be maintained. However, the layout of the churchyard was radically altered after 1853 and some features of the paths and soft landscape are of lesser significance in understanding the overall arrangement. The original building plinth and entrance steps and other hard landscaping features such as the railings are dominant and highly significant from an architectural perspective.**

SHEPHERD (G.) c. 1800-1830. ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, CITY ROAD.
See No. 671.

FIRST SET OF RAILINGS

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6½ × 9½"

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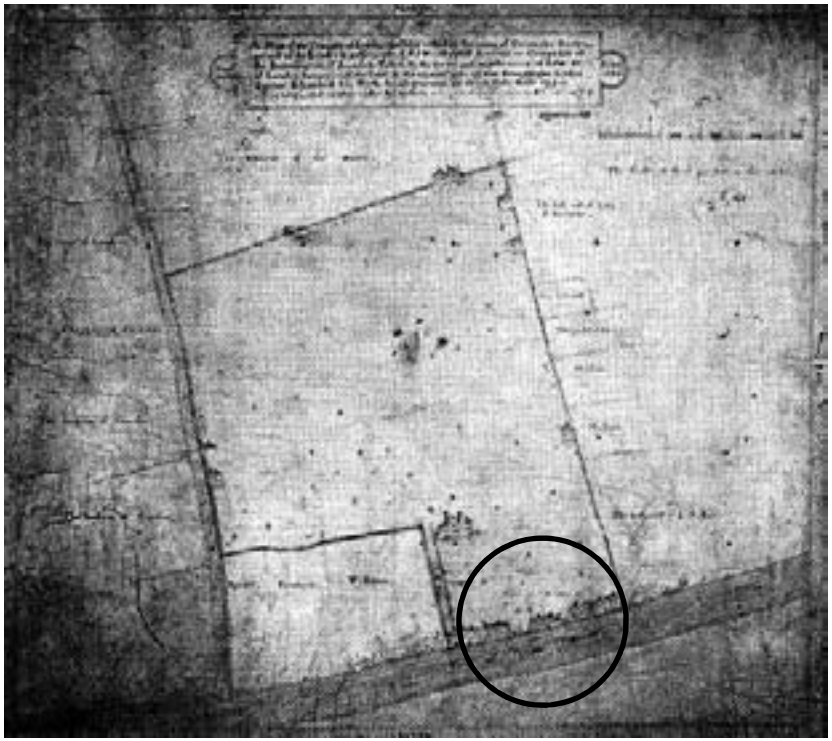
**Figure 10**

The wrought iron railings (separately Listed from the church) which surround the Churchyard, as well as the main entrance of the Burial Ground to the North, have been restored and are of historical significance although the present railings are the second set to be erected, replacing the original boundary structure in 1852. The general appearance of the first set of gates, piers, urns, walls and railings is known from Shepherd's c.1800-1830 engraving which also indicates previous pedimented structures in the South East and South West corners. Some evidence of these previous structures may exist under-ground and if so, will be quite vulnerable **(figure 10)**.



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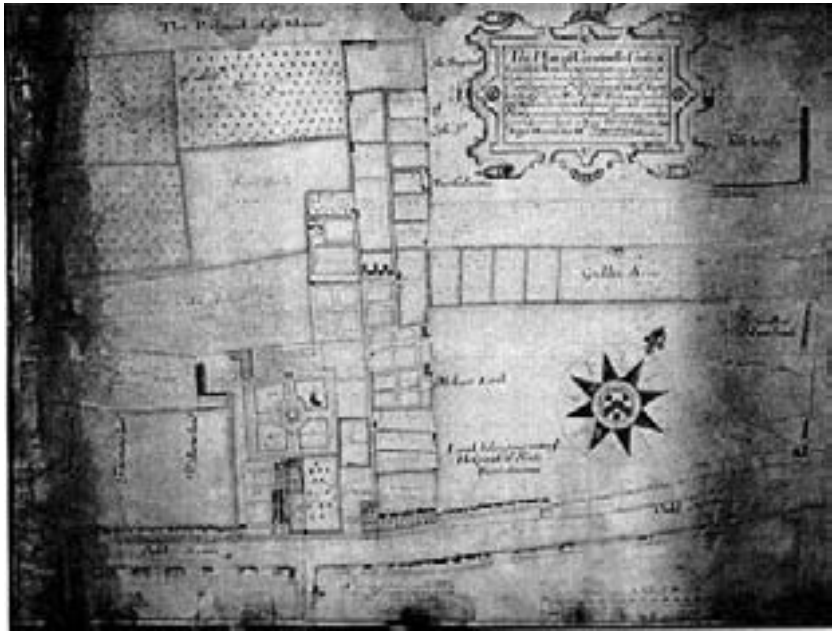

Figure 12

# 3.0 TOPOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

## 3.1 PRE-CHURCH OCCUPATION OF THE SITE

3.1.1 St Luke's Old Street stands in and takes its designation name from one of London's oldest roads – a route which certainly existed in Roman times and, because of its route which does not enter the Roman city, is thought to have been a British track.

3.1.2 Settlement may thus have developed along the road at a very early date; in any event, it is known that the site of St Luke's was developed with gardens and tenements in 1527, the year which effectively marks its modern recorded history, when one Thomas Michell left a ten-acre plot known as Cornwall's Croft or Gardens to the Ironmongers' Company.

3.1.3 A plan of 1592 prepared for the Company **(figure 11)** shows a large gabled farmhouse at approximately the site of St Luke's rectory. This building did not, however, last much longer: by 1633, a new estate plan **(figure 12)** showed the central portion of the property (just under 3 of the 10 acres) completely redeveloped with a three-storey Dutch-gabled house and formal gardens. (This was occupied by a Mrs Anna Hinshaw, and included properties next to the road which were designated for "tenements to be builded".) The main development in this part of London, however, occurred from the late 1660s onward, when the encampments on Moorfields created by refugees from London's fire became permanent settlements.

3.1.4 The need for a suburban church was identified by about 1700, shortly before the Ironmongers' Company began to develop its estate on the four streets which still retain their links with the Ironmongers' Company: Ironmongers' Row is joined by Mitchell Street - named for the benefactor of 1527 – as well as Helmet Row and Lizard Street, named for heraldic elements of the Company's coat of arms.

3.1.5 London's burgeoning new suburbs led in 1711 to the passing of the Fifty New Churches Act, and the site of St Luke's was duly acquired from the Ironmongers' Company in 1718. The specific circumstances of this purchase have not been researched for this document; given the dating of the Mrs Hinshaw's early 17th-century house, however, it seems reasonable to suspect that the sale of the site for a church occurred once the "Hinshaw lease" had fallen in.

3.1.6 A comparison of the plans of 1592 and 1633 with later Ordnance Surveys suggests that archaeological remains of pre-church buildings could be found, most probably to the northwest and southwest of the existing church. Remains of the early 17th-century gardens may also be found to the north and west of the church.

## 3.2 BUILDING ST LUKE'S: 1727-1734

3.2.1 St Luke's Old Street and St John Horsleydown in Southwark were the last two of the Fifty New Churches to be built. By this date, the Commissioners overseeing the new buildings were not only winding down the programme, but also practised in holding architects to budgets. In an indirect but spectacular manner this appears likely to have had an impact on the design of St Luke's.

3.2.2 Although the 19th century tended by default to attribute St Luke's to George Dance (who sat on the vestry from its earliest days), it has long been established that the documentation attributes St Luke's jointly to Nicholas Hawksmoor and John James, the surveyors to the Commissioners for the Fifty New Churches. Of the two, however, the primary design should be attributed to John James whilst the tower is stylistically assigned to Hawksmoor.

3.2.3 It seems somewhat perverse that the main attribution has ever been questioned: Kerry Downes noted that Horace Walpole – who as Downes pointed out, "might be expected to know" – attributed the church to James, and such near-contemporary evidence should be virtually decisive. The problem, of course, has always resided in the remarkable steeple in the shape of a fluted obelisk: historians have simply refused to categorise this feature – widely considered in the 19th century to be ugly and stylistically perverse – with the otherwise sober work of John James, and the only stylistically-consistent explanation is that the design is the work of Hawksmoor.

3.2.4 Although admittedly based on surmise rather than documentation, Downes's explanation seems the most reasonable: that Hawksmoor proposed the obelisk as an initial design, but was refused the opportunity to refine the scheme prior to construction. Downes notes that in the late 1720s Hawksmoor had been frustrated in building an obelisk as the grand Column of Victory at Blenheim Palace, and goes on to point out:

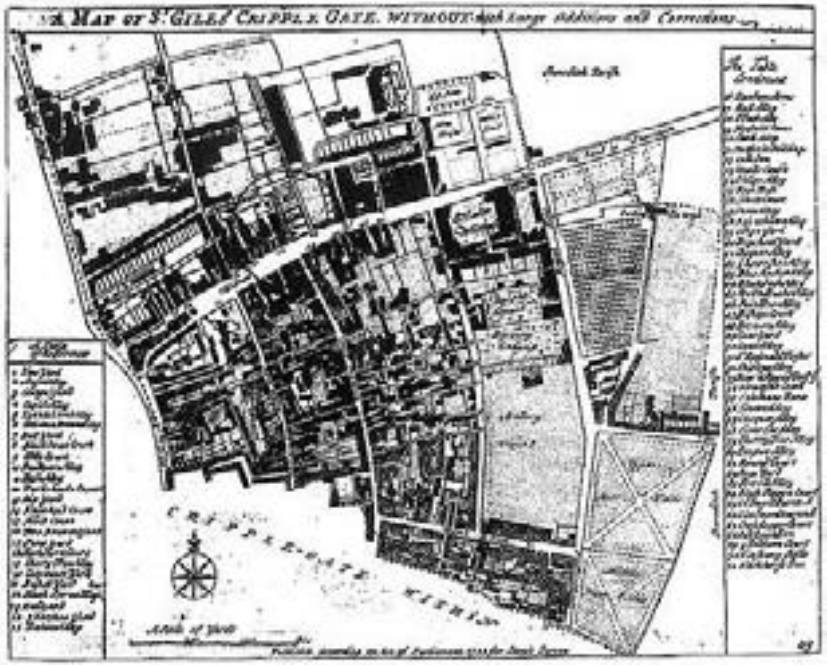


Figure 13

Figure 14

It therefore seems reasonable to think that he [Hawksmoor] might have drawn such a steeple; it still does not seem reasonable to think that he would willingly have let it be built. Second thoughts were very important in Hawksmoor's work.

In this scenario, Hawksmoor's proposal for the tower was literally cast in stone by the Commissioners' insistence that it be built as designed and tendered rather than altered during construction, a course which would have perhaps led to increases in the budget.

3.2.5 Whatever the case, the sequence of building seems to have been uneventfully straightforward. The foundations were laid in 1727; the structure was completed and roofed in 1729; the steeple was built the following year; and the obelisk was completed by Lady Day, March 1731, after which date the fluting was done (a construction detail which is known by virtue of the fact that the scaffolding had to be changed for this purpose). The mason who completed the body of the church in mid summer 1729, Thomas Shepherd, died and was replaced by a new mason, Christopher Cass, for the obelisk. A payment of five pounds is recorded for changing the scaffolding to add the flutes to the obelisk "after it was Erected".

The parish was formally created in 1733 and the church consecrated on St Luke's Day (18th October) of the same year. (Somewhat curiously, the church appears to have been used prior to its consecration, as the first baptism is said to have been carried out on the 4th of September.) The final initial addition to the church was of an organ, built by Jordan & Bridge in 1733 and presented to the church in 1734 by a Mr Buckley, a brewer of Old Street.

3.2.6 The initial layout of St Luke's – which appears to have altered very little during its active life – was a typical galleried Georgian church, the rectangular form of which was broken only by the northeastern vestry room. The parochial facilities were completed with a rectory house in Helmet Row in 1778 and a northern graveyard to supplement the churchyard itself. Internal spatial articulation was largely limited to the domed entrance vestibule and gallery staircases; the cantilevered staircases themselves are particularly elegant 18th-century features.

3.2.7 In spite of this relative simplicity, examination of the stripped-out building raises a few constructional issues. In particular, the sockets and infilled arches visible in the walls behind the galleries suggest possible design changes during construction, whilst in the absence of primary documentation, the initial interior form of the domed staircase halls prior to the insertion of the existing flat ceilings is unclear.

3.2.8 Topographically, the most significant early local relationship was that between the rectory house and the church. The rectory as built had a centralised front door facing the northwest corner of the churchyard which provided comfortably direct access to either the main doors or the northeastern vestry. It appears that the North West gates which are opposite the previous central door position were added in 1852 when the railings were renewed but prior to the doorway being moved into Mitchell Street.

## 3.3 THE ACTIVE CHURCH: 1734-1960

3.3.1 St Luke's was built as a working parish church in a newly-developing, working-class suburb of London **(figure 13)** and, as such, the recorded events of the 18th century appear to have had little impact upon the fabric. In the usual manner, the crypt was used for burials by no later than 1740, and monuments were placed in memory of prominent parishioners. Chief amongst these were the type-founders William Caslon the elder and younger (1766 and 1778; type-founding was an important local industry); the architect George Dance the Elder (1768; also a parish vestryman); and the London historian Thomas Allen (died 1833).

3.3.2 Although during this period much of St Luke's parish was developed as a mix of housing and industry, large areas remained undeveloped even by the time of Horwood's survey of 1813 **(figure 14)**. London's post-Napoleonic expansion, however, covered the remaining fields with housing, and it may have been this influx of population and income which necessitated and enabled some £750 of repairs in 1829. Along with various repairs and maintenance of wood, stone and ironwork, this included stripping and replacing roof coverings with new lead and slates as well as leadwork to the domed roofs of the vestibules.

3.3.3 The major piece of early-Victorian work, however, related to the rebuilding of the organ in 1843-1844 by Gray & Davison. This was a notable rebuild which is said to have created the first church organ with a tremulant, and for the first time in England to have introduced the swell, sub- and super-octaves; these were important innovations, and attracted the organist and composer Henry Smart to St Luke's. (It is said that Smart, who remained here until 1865, heard of this

Figure 16

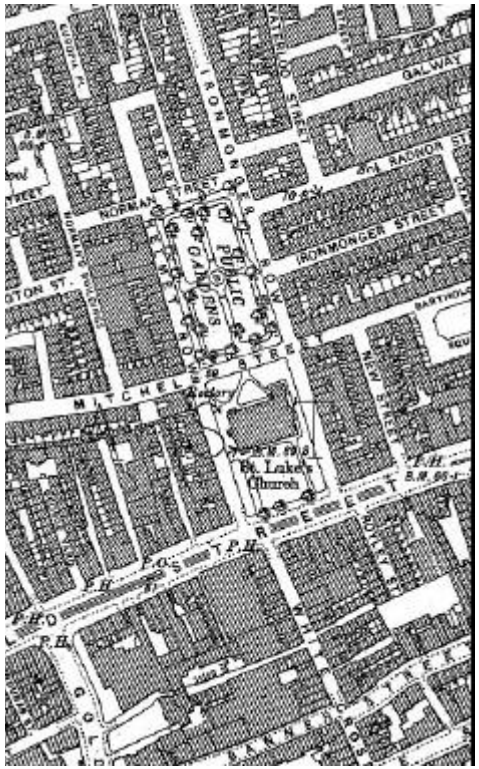


Figure 17

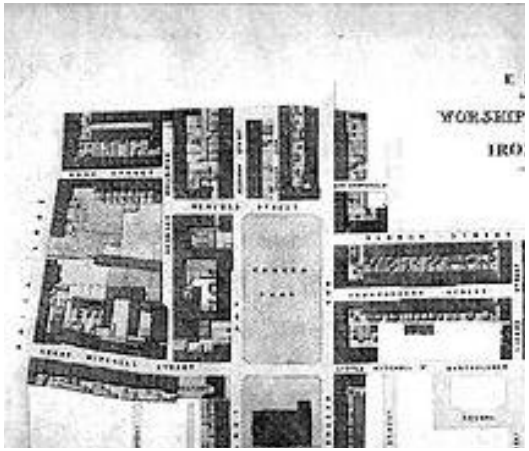

Figure 15

Figure 18

state-of-the-art organ and promptly ousted the previous organist by offering his services at a nominal £50 per annum – with the proviso that the parish would hire a professional quartet of singers to embellish his choir.). The inscription over the west door in the entrance vestibule may relate to this period or the later Blomfield reordering of 1877-1878.

3.3.4 The existing churchyard railings were erected in 1852, the same year in which a number of internal works were carried out. It is unclear if these included the installation of the east window – a nativity, crucifixion and ascension by Clutterbuck – but in the absence of additional primary research, this seems a likely date: Bumpus, writing at the turn of the century, dated the glass to "60 years ago". He also noted that the central panel had been painted too large due to a blunder in taking the measurements, and had thus been cut down through the figures in all directions, and was dismissive as to the quality of the work: The group, which has caught all the coarse literal fidelity of the cinquecento School, is confused, there is an almost total absence of symbolical allusion, and of devotional affect there is not a trace.

3.3.5 Given that the churchyard had just been re-railed in 1852, it may seem curious to find that burials ceased in the graveyard and crypt in 1853. This was part of a major reform of burial practices in London, however, and the culmination of a long-standing campaign to completely ban in-town burials. (Almost all London burial grounds were closed between 1853 and 1855.) The remaining works to the original Georgian church included repair of the exterior fabric in 1869.

3.3.6 In the absence of detailed work with the vestry minutes, the date of the addition to the east side of the vestry of what appears to be a toilet or storage block is unclear. The feature is not shown on early block plans of the Ironmongers' estate **(figure 15)**, but is clearly shown on the ground plan of the church in the Ordnance Survey of 1872. The most likely dates would appear to be either during the re-ordering of the churchyard in 1852, or as part of the exterior repairs of 1869. The major relandscaping of the churchyard surrounding the church is shown on the map of 1871 **(figure 16)** so can be dated at between 1852 and 1871.

3.3.7 The major Victorian work to St Luke's was undertaken in 1877-1878 by [Sir] Arthur Blomfield; it would have been this date when the altar was raised to a more conspicuous height, following one of Blomfield's stated principles of church design. The same period saw the landscaping and opening as a public park of the disused northern burial ground, and also seems to be the date when the Rectory was extended and given its bay window, and the entrance was moved from the centre of the east side to the north side of the house, as these alter ations appear on the Ordnance Survey revision of 1894 **(figures 17 and 18)**.

3.3.8 The works of the 1870s were reported to have cost £7,000, but it is unclear if this figure included the extension and reordering of the rectory and/or the landscaping of the disused burial ground. If it did include these works, the actual repairs and alterations to the church seem likely to have been much less dramatic than one would expect to find with such a large budget. (The opening of the burial ground as a public park incurred on-going maintenance costs for the vestry, and this may account for an 1895 description of the churchyard itself as having been closed and filled with rubbish.)

3.3.9 The Victorian works to St Luke's mark the last real restoration of the building: 20th-century works were primarily directed at underpinning the structure, as the north side was built on unstable ground. Particularly bad subsidence was experienced in 1911, and repairs consistent with this date are visible in the interior of the extant church. A further undoubted result of the subsidence was the repair of the northeastern vestry by simply rendering the sloping exterior wall in order to make it vertical; this repair is still visible, and its nature suggests that the original 18th-century stone fabric of the wall and Venetian window survives beneath.

3.3.10 The area surrounding St Luke's was also comprehensively rebuilt in the early 20th century: in 1904-1905 the L.C.C. built Priestly and Wenlake Houses to the southwest of the rectory **(figure 19)**, opening a new vista to the west end of the church **(figure 20)**. These were joined between the wars by further housing, and the public baths, wash-houses and swimming pool in Ironmonger Row.

3.3.11 The church does not appear to have suffered substantial war damage, and continued in use until 1959, at which date further serious subsidence made the building unsafe; this led to closure of the building and a complete stripping-out of internal fabric and removal of the roof. Ironically, this made the St Luke's resemble a bombed church rather than a war-time survivor, while parts of the fabric were re-used to embellish re-built churches. (The parish was united St Giles Cripplegate – its mother parish, out of which it had been formed in 1733 – to which building the organ was removed, whilst the reredos and altar rails were reused in the northwest chapel of St Andrew Holborn.)


Figure 19

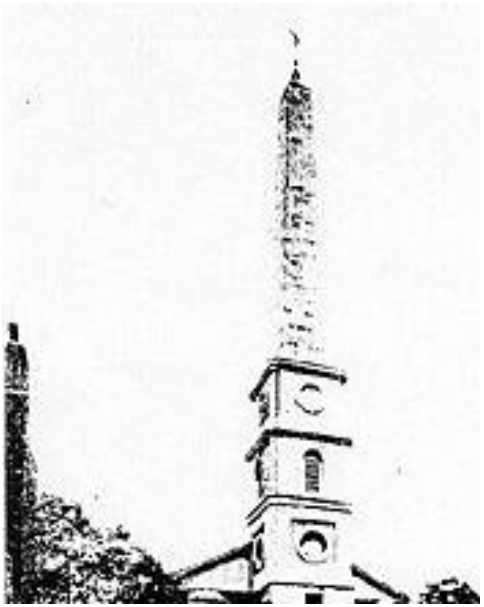

Figure 20

Figure 21

## 3.4 ST LUKE'S SINCE 1960

3.4.1 The status of St Luke since its dismantling has been that of a managed ruin. In 1964 the crypt coffins were covered with spoil and the access points bricked up, and whilst the crypt suffered vandalism between that date and 1994, the building has remained locked and the structure left in a state of maintained dereliction; in 1972 it was noted that the roof slates were still stacked in the churchyard.

3.4.2 Various schemes for the reuse of the building were proposed, and in 1996-1997 the canopy of the churchyard trees was reduced and the previously-closed yard **(figure 21)** relandscaped and opened to the public.

Figure 22

Figure 24

Figure 29

Figure 30


Figure 23

Figure 25

Figure 31

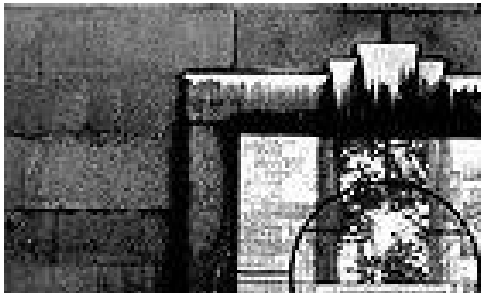

Figure 32

Figure 34

Figure 26

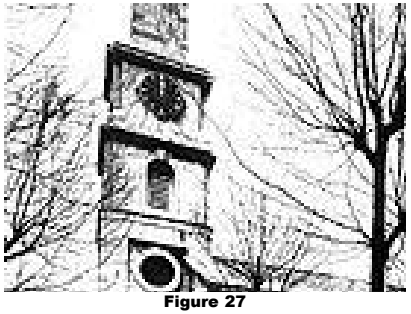

Figure 27

Figure 28

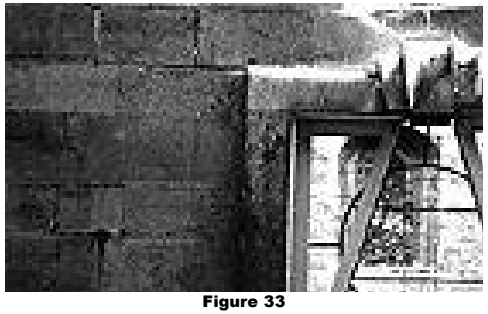

Figure 33

# 4.0 ANALYSIS OF EXISTING SITE AND BUILDING

## 4.1 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

St Luke's not only acted as the parochial centre of the neighbourhood from the 1730's, but also occupies the site of the primary tenanted holding of the Ironmongers' Company estate. As such, there is a long history of occupation of this site as a major local centre, and the possible survival of archaeological remains of domestic structures cannot be discounted.

The local street pattern is largely contemporary with the purchase in 1718 of the future site of St Luke's and its burial ground. The survival of this pattern dictates that the relationships between the churchyard and its surroundings are important elements of the existing urban fabric.

Of particular importance to this existing context are the northwest and north entrances to the churchyard, leading to the rectory and the burial ground respectively as well as the west gate leading to the main entrance **(figure 22)** and the south west **(figure 23)** Old Street gate leading to the south west entrance.

It is clear from the map of 1813 **(figure 24)** that prior to the re-railing of 1852 the only established paths in the immediate churchyard were from the south west gate, the west gate and the north gate. This was supplemented with a path from a new north west gate opposite the then central door to the rectory and further paths connecting the vestry to the north gate and around the east end and to the south east gate. This relandscaping presumably followed the re-railing in 1852 and churchyard closure in 1853 and first appears on the map of 1871 **(figure 25)**. The dominant feature of the inter relationship of the building and landscape is the plinth and entrance steps of the church. Intermediate railings on low plinth walls of brickwork with stone copings around the west end of the church are shown in the 1950's photographs **(figures 26 to 28)** along with other low walls and hard landscaping features within the churchyard. These were presumably removed in the recent landscaping of the churchyard (1995/96).

The soft landscape is characteristically at a lower level than the plinth. Hard landscaping features that are higher than plinth level tend to be isolated such as the remaining table tombs.

The relationship of the plinth and the level of the soft landscape within the churchyard is critical. The green landscape should be kept below the plinth level and if intervention above the plinth level is necessary (i.e. for disabled access or ventilation plenums), this should be in stonework which relates to the plinth or in the form of isolated features.

## 4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The burial ground to the north was laid out as a public garden in the 1870s, since which date it has been subject to normal parochial/public garden maintenance. Similarly, the recent reduction of the tree canopy and relandscaping of the churchyard presumably removed any unusual environmental habitats.

Whilst the interior of the church has obviously been maintained on an intermittent basis, the intervening 40 year period of limited maintenance and restricted access has allowed the interior to naturally develop **(figures 29 and 30)**. At the very least, it would be prudent to undertake an environmental audit of the interior prior to clearance for redevelopment. An initial ecological report carried out in summer 1999 is section 7.0 this document.

## 4.3 BUILDING EXTERIOR

The exterior stone masonry facades are entirely constructed in Portland Stone with granite steps at the entrances. (Refer to Resurgem report for identification). Apart from minor areas of indented repairs the masonry appears to be original including the vestry structure (refer to 4.6).

The structural distortion on the North side **(figure 31)**, and the exposure by the removal of interior finishes of previous attempts to shore up and consolidate the building is evidence that is critical to the understanding of the building history and should be retained. The temporary bracing of the distorted window opening should be removed if possible and substituted with a more subtle and inconspicuous strengthening solution **(figures 32 and 33)**.

There is an obvious need for secular redevelopment to rectify the sub structural problems which led to the abandonment and destruction of the church. Alterations should be of minimal intervention and maximum reversibility. Their style should respect the original form but be of contemporary character.

The reparability of the exterior fabric needs further detailed assessment but it appears to be viable, and there is a need for repair and reinstatement to proceed on the basis of minimum necessary replacement of existing fabric **(figure 34)**. The repairs to the existing


Figure 36

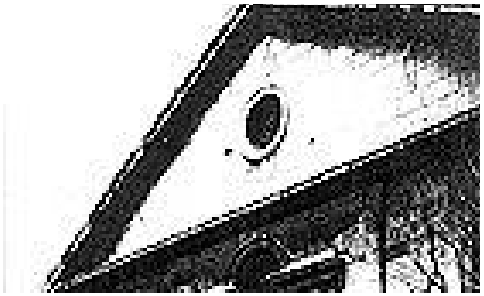

Figure 35


Figure 38


Figure 40

Figure 41

Figure 37

Figure 39

Figure 42

stonework recommended by Resurgam in their recent report (1999) are of this nature and they should be carried out. There appears to be sufficient physical and photographic evidence to accurately reinstate areas of stonework lost (principally the East gable and parapets) in the 1959 partial demolition **(figure 35)**. The original joint pattern should be respected as closely as possible even if this has distorted subsequently.

Shepherd's c.1800-1830 engraving **(figure 36)** and the 1750's engraving of the church from the west end **(figure 37)** both indicate a pedestal with a sun dial on it on the south parapet. There is no recent photographic evidence of this so it would be too conjectural to restore this feature but there may be physical evidence of it which should be retained and recorded if exposed.

The roof covering on the main body of the church and vestry prior to partial demolition was slate, most likely welsh but it is unlikely that this was the original. The vestry minutes record that the lead and slates were renewed in 1829. This suggests that the original covering of the church roof was slate with lead gutters and flashings. The original slate would have probably been Westmorland Green. It is possible but unlikely that the original finish could have been sand cast leadwork. Further investigation and research is required to establish whether the documentary evidence exists to confirm the original roofing materials. The vestry roof was probably a flat sand cast lead roof originally but was changed to an awkward hipped pitched slate roof at a later date. The 1829 repairs also included leadwork to the domed roofs over the staircases but there is no reference to any glazing element in this work (refer 4.4 below).

## 4.4 ENTRANCE VESTIBULE AND STAIRCASE HALLS

With the exception of the vestry room (see 4.6 below), the entrance vestibule **(figures 38 to 40)** and gallery staircase halls are the only interior spaces of the early 18th century church which have survived, albeit in an altered form. As such, they are of prime historic importance.

The spaces are architecturally interesting, in their sophisticated but consistent manipulation of space in the form of a domed entrance hall and (as seems likely) domes to the staircase halls.

No documentation for the form of the staircase hall ceilings has yet been located, but the existing flat ceilings, cornices and approximately 300mm of the wall plaster appear to be modern replacements (c. 1930's gypsum/fibrous plaster) inconsistent with the documented existence of exterior domes as well as with the interior form of the entrance vestibule **(figure 41)**. It is unclear, however, as to how the domes were finished: although logic suggests that they may have included some form of glazing, it is known that in later years the domes were lead-covered.

It is important that planning for redevelopment includes physical investigation to establish as far as possible the original form of the staircase hall ceilings. Assuming that the premised replacement of domes with flat ceilings proves correct, and evidence of the original form exists in the structure above, they could be reinstated in a more sympathetic manner.

The cantilevered staircases are excellent and elegant examples of the early 18th century's mastery of this form **(figure 42)**. Similarly, the plain ironwork and handrails are aesthetically consistent and in keeping with the known budget constraints at St Luke's. With the exception of the later raised handrails, the staircases thus seem likely to be original. Any restoration should include the removal of the handrail extenders if possible.

Little is known of the original – or even of the later – decorative finishes of the entrance and staircase vestibules. Physical investigation such as paint analysis supported by further documentary research should thus be undertaken to establish an historically-sympathetic decorative scheme which will elucidate the nature of the original spaces.

The North West cantilevered staircase is in a poor structural condition and although it is eminently repairable as a non-used feature, if it is to be used for its intended purpose would (and of course the original purpose) as an access staircase to the gallery, it would need to be dismantled and rebuilt.

The nosing of the stone treads have been cut off and the top landing has been re-paved in sandstone. The lower stair to the crypt has been truncated. The level of repair, rebuilding and restoration required in this staircase area is too great to be realistic if it is to be reused as vertical circulation.

Given that the provision of a satisfactory fully accessible vertical circulation route to the gallery is a necessity, it would be more valuable and viable to record and dismantle the stair (which is in fact a necessity if the stair were to be reused) and install the treads in an on-site artefacts store for display and research purposes, retain the physical evidence of the staircase fixing and position and reintroduce a new contemporary staircase and lift

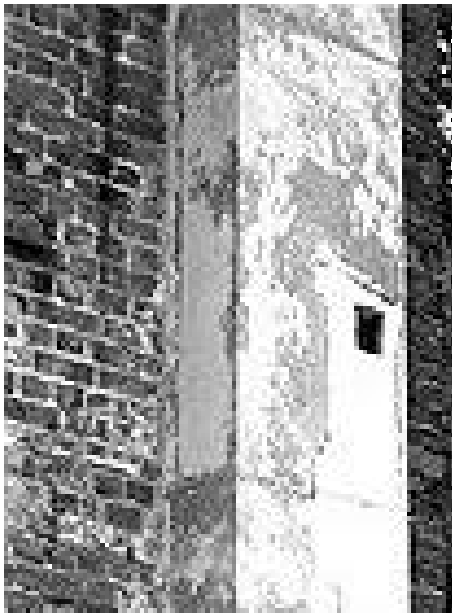

Figure 43

Figure 44

Figure 45

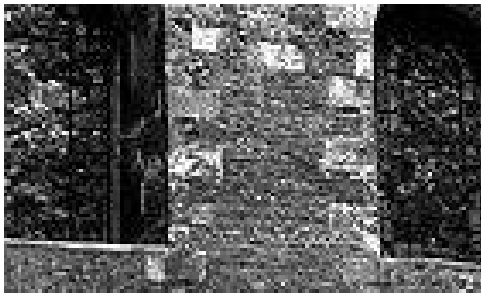

Figure 46

Figure 48

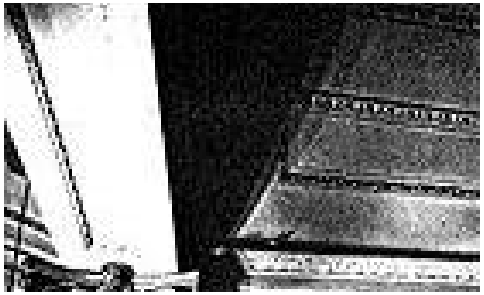

Figure 55

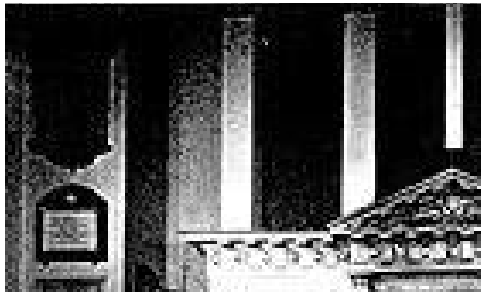

Figure 56

Figure 47

Figure 49

Figure 50

Figure 51

Figure 52

Figure 53

Figure 54

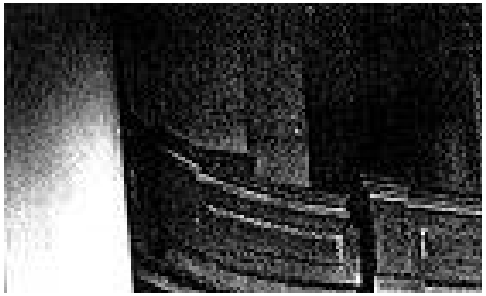

Figure 57

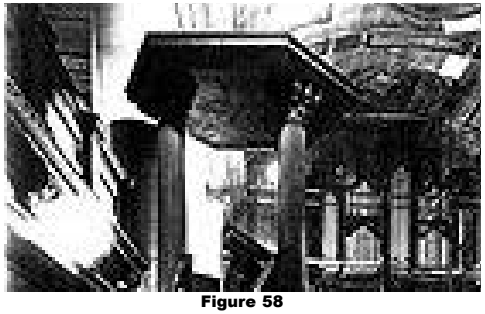

Figure 58

Figure 59

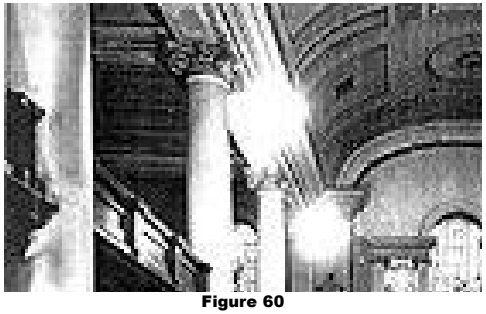

Figure 60

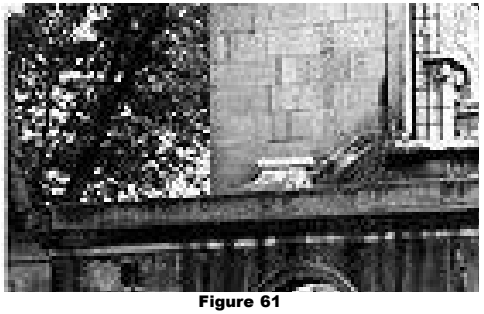

Figure 61

structure in a sensitive and reversible manner.

The West windows in the Staircases appear to have been altered and the iron frames are later, probably mid 19th century, but this requires further investigation.

The South West staircase and entrance vestibule are both a different case entirely as most of the fittings and finishes remain intact and in a reasonable condition. These areas should be fully restored to their original appearance.

## 4.5 MAIN CHURCH

The main body of the church was entirely gutted in 1960, and only vestigial evidence remains of plasterwork and previous fittings. Nonetheless, some of these remains are of great importance, such as the two eastern pilasters with carved capitals and ghostly marks on the face showing the profile of the demolished gallery structure **(figure 43)**.

Apart from the pilasters the features that are of prime historical significance are the original remaining doors, door frames and ironmongery. Other internal fragmentary remnants and physical evidence of previous features that are also of prime importance and should be retained and conserved are listed below (in order of priority):-

1. Cut-back areas of brickwork to accommodate monuments and other internal features **(figures 44 and 45)**.

2. Lime stains on brickwork that show where the walls were directly plastered along with any fragments of plaster such as the skirting profile **(figure 46)**.

3. Fixing points for internal panelling and other joinery now lost.

4. Original structural features and openings that were hidden behind finishes such as the blocked arches at gallery level which may have indicated a conventilation that was not used. (They are however typical of arched beam end recesses), recesses for rainwater down pipes, built in flues and vent shafts **(figures 47 and 48)**.

5. Early structural repairs in 18th/19th century red/brown hand made clay brickwork necessary due to subsidence problems in the North and East walls. Generally these have been carried out in compatible and in some cases matching materials.

Some later repairs (20th century but earlier than the partial demolition) have been executed in harder yellow stock bricks and cement mortar which is much harder than the original. These areas are possibly incompatible in structural terms and are also much more ‘flush’ in texture. Having recorded these repairs it may be beneficial structurally, aesthetically and acoustically to replace these recent repairs with more compatible materials, finished to match the adjacent early brickwork.

More recent repairs (since the partial demolition) appear to have been carried out in a much more appropriate manner and should be retained as they are.

Any surface treatment, cleaning or surface coating should be reversible and not further damage the physical evidence.

There are remnants of Victorian stained glass but this is only partial and should be carefully removed and displayed in the artefacts store along with any introduced saddle bars. Original ironwork frames exist in the North and South windows and possibly some remnants of the ironwork in the East window exists insitu. This requires further site investigation.

Whilst acknowledging that secular redevelopment renders the reinstatement of an ecclesiastical decorative scheme inappropriate, the recreation of the interiors should at least respect the early forms of the church **(figures 49 to 60)**, including the columns, galleries and vaulted ceiling in some way albeit in a contemporary style. The alterations should be of minimum intervention and maximum reversibility.

## 4.6 VESTRY

The flying flue is highly significant in terms of the original form as it connects to the fireplace in the vestry and is integral with the fabric of the main church, reinforcing the view that this is part of the original phase.

The northeast vestry forms an integral part of the original church **(figure 61)**, and aside from the entrance vestibule and staircase halls, presents the only partially-surviving interior of St Luke’s.

Figure 62

Figure 63

Although the vestry clearly suffered from the same severe subsidence which led to the dismantling of the church - the north wall was simply rendered to re-establish a vertical line - the external fabric is intact and could be repaired rather than replaced **(figure 62)**. However if the vestry is to be removed and rebuilt the walls should be fully recorded and original materials either re-incorporated or stored on site **(figure 63)**.

The profile of the vestry roof prior to demolition can be traced both physically and in record photographs of 1960. Research has not established the original roof profile, but additional physical and documentary research may suggest the form of a sympathetic reinstatement.

Although it definitely pre-dates the Ordnance Survey of 1871, the date of the eastern extension of the vestry is unclear. Whilst redevelopment should not necessarily presuppose the retention of the footprint of this extension, physical examination of the structure may suggest the original form of this side of the building.

Internally, the fireplace surround and recesses provide good evidence of the original interior form and may retain physical evidence of decorative finishes. These elements should ideally be retained in any redevelopment of the building, but if this proves to be unreasonable the finishes should be carefully research and recorded and the fixtures reused in the redeveloped space.

## 4.7 CRYPTS

The known state of the crypts and an assessment of their archaeological potential were examined in a 1996 study by the Museum of London Archaeology Service. This found that whilst the crypts undoubtedly hold potential interest, they appear to be structurally unsound and their excavation may not be straightforward.

Nonetheless, the proposed clearance of the crypts and their replacement by habitable spaces will demand a full programme of excavation and recording, including the removal of the floor of the main body of the church. Any remnants of the floor finishes, including positions of gallery columns and fragments of Blomfield's 1877/78 tiling scheme should be recorded accurately prior to demolition.

# 5.0 CONSERVATION POLICY

## 5.1 CONSERVATION GUIDANCE

Having established the value of and the risk to each area and element of the building the conservation issues have been identified and defined within section 4.0 of this document. These are embodied in the Conservation Policies below which have been adopted by the owners and building management and which are statements of general approach. Guidance that is more specific to a particular place or element within the building or a particular issue is included within the paragraphs following each policy. This specific guidance refers back to the analysis in section 4.0 and can be altered as circumstances change but the policy is to be considered as a constant.

The Conservation Plan therefore provides a multi-level framework of understanding within which any proposals for development can be evaluated and the maintenance and repair of the building fabric can be appropriately planned. The Plan is not there to prevent development but to help guide the form it will take. Some of the detailed conservation guidance may appear to be prescriptive and prohibitive, and at face value would argue against a development like the LSO conversion from ever taking place. However, any alteration to an historic building will be a balance of gains and losses, and demonstrably the gains to St Lukes of having such a development outweigh the loss of the vestry and the alterations to the other areas.

The same balanced judgement needs to be made right down to the smallest decisions affecting the building so that any change and its consequences can be valued within the wider context. The Conservation Plan is therefore an essential tool in formulating and directing any proposals for change within the building.

## 5.2 THE CONSERVATION POLICIES

The following **CONSERVATION POLICIES** have been adopted by the St Lukes Management Co so as to ensure the appropriate conservation and development of the building.

**MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL OF THE BUILDING FABRIC**

**Policy 5.2.1 Maintain and repair the building so as to retain as much of their early fabric in their original form as possible, both externally and internally right down to the smallest details.**

All building materials ultimately have a limited life which will depend upon various factors such as the quality of the materials, the degree of wear, the regularity of maintenance, or the exposure to the elements.

There is normally a range of choices available in such cases from complete renewal on the one hand to strengthening or patching on the other. In the case of historic materials there should be a presumption against total or blanket renewal if at least some of the material is of acceptable standard. Examples would include:-

- Brickwork, mortar pointing
- Portland stone ashlar or carved building stone
- Stone floor paving
- Plasterwork
- Oak doors and panelling
- Door and window ironwork and ironmongery

In cases such as these we would expect any sound material to be retained and only damaged material to be replaced by jointing, scarfing, piecing-in, or by the replacement of worn components.

Where possible retain insitu at least one representative sample of the elements being renewed if an individual example (or examples) can be found which is not so badly decayed or worn as the others.

The areas of stonework lost (principally the East gable and parapets) should be reinstated as accurately as possible from photographs and physical evidence (refer 4.3).

**RESPECTING THE HISTORIC CHARACTER**

**Policy 5.2.2 Respect the historic evolution of the building, retain wherever possible all significant clues relating to its development, and record all evidence exposed in the course of carrying out inspections or alterations.**

As an historic building of great value and significance which has developed and changed over its life St Lukes has become itself a complex archaeological artifact in which all the clues relating to its history remain imprinted in its structure, in many cases concealed by change upon change over the intervening years.

There is a temptation when carrying out alterations to a building to 'tidy up' by removing redundant installations or structures. If these are of historic significance they should if possible be left unaltered and insitu, even if they are to be covered over again. Examples would include:-

- Vaults structure and arches within floors or ceilings
- Bricked up doors, windows or other former openings
- Floor paving concealed by later floor coverings
- Outlines of former structures

If such surviving features are discovered during opening up, they should be appropriately recorded irrespective of whether they are to be removed or not. The procedure for recording is the subject of Policy 5.2.13.

### RENEWAL OF MATERIALS

**Policy 5.2.3 Where original, early or significant materials or elements have to be renewed they should wherever possible be replaced like for like to retain the building's historic and aesthetic integrity.**

Notwithstanding Policy 5.2.1 materials have from time to time to be renewed. All significant materials should wherever possible be replaced with materials either from the same source or with ones which match as closely as possible both their physical properties and their visual characteristics.

### EVALUATION OF PROPOSED CHANGE

**Policy 5.2.4 Before considering any change to the fabric of the building carry out a thorough investigation to establish the significance of that particular part of the building affected, and evaluate the proposals accordingly, taking into account the Conservation Guidance stated in this plan.**

St Lukes is a Grade 1 Listed Building. Listed Building Consent is required for any works of demolition, alteration or extension which would affect the character of the building. The purpose of the Conservation Plan is to give both the owners and the Planning Authority a yardstick against which to measure any proposed changes.

Some changes will have greater impact than others. On the one hand will be the particular qualities of the part of the building affected:

- Its historical or architectural significance
- The significance of its surroundings
- Its visual or physical vulnerability
- Its scale

Weighed against this will be:

- The relative scale and impact of the proposed alteration
- The significance of the proposal in relation to the building's future use

Any proposal for change, however insignificant it may seem, should be subjected to the same process of scrutiny, understanding and evaluation.

The aim of this Conservation Policy should be to channel these changes in a way which allows the significant aspects of the existing building to be retained whilst the new is also accommodated, to the mutual benefit of both. An impact assessment should be made taking into account any relevant information on the history and significance of the affected areas included in the Conservation Plan, and a mitigation strategy evaluation carried out.

### DESIGN OF NEW ELEMENTS

**Policy 5.2.5 Any proposal to introduce changes into an historic building or space should take into account the effect of the changes on its character.**

The vulnerability of a building will depend on its significance and its setting. The spire and tower should, for instance, remain unaffected by any significant alteration.

Internally the character of a space and its relationship to neighbouring spaces needs to be taken into account.

A new doorway into a space may best be integrated by giving it a location and details which match the character of the space, but a new staircase within the space might best be introduced in contemporary materials and style. The first approach may confuse the archaeology of the building but it will maintain the 'spirit' of the space; the latter is more 'honest' but may be visually discordant.

### INTERVENTIONS IN SIGNIFICANT SPACES

**Policy 5.2.6 In spaces of high architectural significance any essential interventions must be subservient, discreet and reversible.**

Changing approaches to the comfort and acoustic performance of the space and to the provision of environmental services for that purpose are just two of the many and varied pressures on the historic fabric to introduce alterations.

### INTERVENTIONS IN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT SPACES IN AREAS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE

**Policy 5.2.7 Structure which is of architectural or historic interest in areas of secondary importance shall be awarded the same level of respect as structure in the principal spaces.**

In areas such as the upper levels of the tower or service voids the building structure has often survived substantially as built. This forms a significant component of the building's history.

It should be respected as such, and careful thought needs to be given to service routes and other interventions which may disturb it.

First and foremost is the need to retain the integrity of arches, vaults, lintols and other features.

It should be remembered that services are ephemeral and are likely to be replaced every thirty years or so. An opening, once formed, is a permanent alteration to the historic fabric. It should therefore only be altered having given due consideration to any alternative which would avoid damage. Could the service be re-routed to involve less intervention to the early structure, for instance, or could it be routed instead through an area of previously damaged brickwork?

### INTERVENTIONS IN SPACES OF LESSER SIGNIFICANCE

**Policy 5.2.8 In spaces of lesser architectural or historic significance interventions may be acceptable, but the wider effect on adjacent significant spaces must be taken fully into account.**

Any works to the building fabric which involves demolition, alteration or extension may be subject to Listed Building Consent, no matter how marginal or insignificant the fabric may seem to be.

### THE VALUE OF LATER ALTERATIONS

**Policy 5.2.9 Any proposal to remove a later building phase and to reinstate an earlier phase as a facsimile should be adopted only after giving a thorough evaluation of the existing as regards its rarity, its quality, and its historical significance.**

There is currently a fashion for returning historic buildings or spaces to their former or original state by the removal of later accretions. In terms of visual continuity and consistency this may well be a justifiable course of action.

However, the fact that what exists is more recent and perhaps now considered visually inappropriate is not in itself sufficient justification for its removal. An alteration of quality in a contemporary style may be considered of greater value than a hypothetical recreation of an earlier style. It is certainly more 'honest' in terms of historical interpretation.

In such circumstances the two options should be thoroughly evaluated and debated before the decision is taken to remove the existing.

### SPACE WITHIN A SPACE

**Policy 5.2.10 In spaces of architectural or historic significance there should be a presumption against concealing the form of the architecture by constructing a false space within.**

The main body of the church retains its scale and spacial integrity. Any intervention or insertion should respect this and not detract from the historic character of the space.

### BELOW GROUND ARCHAEOLOGY

**Policy 5.2.11 Any excavations below external ground level or beneath basement floors may affect archaeological deposits which should be investigated and recorded prior to commencement by the building archaeologist.**

There is a likelihood of archaeological remains within the Churchyard areas and below the crypts.

### EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

**Policy 5.2.12 The Building's Management should establish procedures for the scrutiny of any proposal for change, however minor, by staff who are knowledgeable in and sensitive to the historic fabric and who can evaluate the vulnerability of the fabric which will be affected.**

Any proposals for change should be evaluated by means of an impact assessment related to the Plan and mitigation proposals put forward where change is unavoidable or considered of greater benefit.

### RECORDING HISTORIC FEATURES

**Policy 5.2.13 The Building's Development Project Team should establish procedures for suitably qualified staff to investigate and record any previously concealed features relating to the historic evolution of the building.**

This will be particularly important during the proposed development but also during future changes.

### A STORE FOR SALVAGED BUILDING ARTIFACTS

**Policy 5.2.14 A store will be established and maintained as a permanent and safe repository for salvaged architectural features or fittings.**

As stated in Policy 5.2.1 the aim should be to retain as much as possible of its early fabric in its original form in situ.

There will however be situations in which representative, rare or otherwise, significant artifacts are removed, either because they are worn out or as a result of approved alterations. These should be deposited in an on site store in a form in which they will remain accessible for research and reference, each duly labelled with provenance, date of removal and significance, and catalogued for reference.

Examples might include

- window frames or glazing
- door frames
- mortar or plaster samples
- decorative plasterwork
- bricks
- stone features or samples
- ironmongery and ironwork

### STAFF AND CONTRACTOR INDUCTION

**Policy 5.2.15 The Building's Management shall introduce procedures for providing an induction course for staff and contractors to explain the merits and the duties of working in a Listed Building**

Awareness and care are keynotes for anyone who will be working in or on the fabric of the building. The special qualities and the significance of the building will be unknown to many who are employed to work in or on it, and the need for understanding stated in these policies needs to be communicated to those into whose care the building is being entrusted.

### APPROPRIATE USES AND FEATURES

**Policy 5.2.16 The Building's Management should continue to monitor its accommodation so as to ensure appropriate uses are allocated to the historic areas.**

Features which detract from the character of the building should be avoided.

### REVIEW OF THE CONSERVATION POLICIES

**Policy 5.2.17 The Building's Management should review the Conservation Policies from time to time and to adapt them, or to add new policies, as the case may be, so as to ensure that they remain comprehensive and relevant.**

### ADOPTION OF THE CONSERVATION PLAN

**Policy 5.2.18 The Building's Management shall formally adopt the Conservation Plan and publish, manage and disseminate the Plan as necessary.**

### ROOFS

**Policy 5.2.19 The new roof coverings should respect the design and materials of the original roof to reinstate and protect the visual/formal integrity of the building.**

The stonework of the spire should be retained and conserved according to the principal in policy 5.2.21 (refer 4.3).

### INTERNAL WALLS - BRICKWORK

**Policy 5.2.20 Where historic brickwork survives with its original pointing this should wherever possible be retained including any surface finish.**

Previous blocked openings or repairs and other features should be retained (refer 4.5).

### EXTERNAL WALLS - STONEWORK

**Policy 5.2.21 Portland Stone ashlar walls and carved details shall be properly maintained and repaired.**

The stonework shall be maintained and repaired using traditional and reversible techniques of conservation allowing as much of the original fabric to remain as possible, preserving intact throatings and weatherings to prevent staining and erosion. The distortions in the structure should be retained (refer 4.3).

### EXTERNAL PAVING

**Policy 5.2.22 External paving steps and other original or early hardlandscaping features should be retained and conserved. New acretions should respect the character of the original (refer 4.1).**

### HISTORIC DOORS, DOOR FRAMES AND IRONMONGERY

**Policy 5.2.23 Historic doors and their frames of particular quality or significance should be retained in use as far as is practicable and any modifications or upgrading shall be discreet and where possible reversible.**

All the original doors and frames should be retained and conserved. The vestry door should be incorporated or stored.

### HISTORIC WINDOWS

**Policy 5.2.24 Historic windows and their associated architectural details of particular significance should be retained wherever possible.**

Where original or early window frames survive these form a valuable and significant part of the historic building which should be retained in situ wherever possible.

Cylinder glazing adds character and ‘sparkle’ to the windows both from inside and outside. All new glazing within original frames should use this type of glass.

Proposals for double, treble or secondary glazing must be particularly closely scrutinised because this will alter the character of the window, not only because of the additional frame or the alterations required to the window, but also because of the double reflection which results when viewed from the outside. Secondary glazing of historic windows wherever possible should therefore be avoided, but where this is necessary, for example for acoustic separation in the proposed auditorium, it should be designed to be reversible and to have a minimum impact upon the historic building fabric and character. Fixings should not cause permanent damage and the glazing design should reduce any double reflection to a minimum.

### UNIVERSAL ACCESS

**Policy 5.2.25 In providing for universal access to all parts of the Building ensure that equipment is integrated sensitively into the architecture.**

Legislation now requires convenient access to be provided for all to most parts of the building, for visitors and staff alike. In areas of architectural significance, and in all public areas, this must be achieved sensitively.

Any installation to aid mobility of disabled persons, from wheelchair users to those with walking difficulties and the partially sighted may involve a permanent change to the building, and care must be taken to integrate the alterations with sensitivity. Wherever possible the new equipment should be installed in such a way as to avoid compromising the architectural form of the space.

Of all the possible solutions for incorporating such access, the least intrusive and damaging appears to be the option that inserts a new stair and lift into the North West staircase.

# 6.0 CHRONOLOGY

| | |
|---|---|
| Anciently | Old Street in existence by Roman times; thought to be pre-Roman in light of its route bypassing the City |
| Early 1500 | This area probably back-filled land on the marsh created by the Roman wall (Moorfields). Future site of church fell within a 10-acre croft bequeathed in 1527 to Ironmongers Company by Thomas Michell, said at that time to have been built up with gardens and tenements |
| 1560s | Agas map |
| 1592 | Plan of Ironmongers' Estate "commonly known as Cornwall's Croft"; mediaeval farmhouse shown to northwest of church site |
| 1633 | Plan of Ironmongers' Estate, showing rebuilt house (now a three-storey, Dutch-gabled house and garden partly on site of church) |
| Late 1600s | Moorfields colonised in 1660s by refugees from Great Fire as an encampment which became permanent; need for a church identified by c.1700. |
| Early 1700s | Building of Michell Street, Ironmonger Row, Lizard Street and Helmet Row on Ironmonger's Estate |
| 1711 | Fifty New Churches Act passed |
| 1718 | Site acquired from ironmongers' Company for St Luke's |
| 1727-1733 | St Luke's built. Attributed by Walpole to John James, but generally ascribed to Hawksmoor and James and the surveyors for the 50 New Churches. Exterior appears generally to be James; obelisk steeple thought to be Hawksmoor |
| 1727 | Foundations laid |
| 1729 | Structure complete and roofed |
| 1730 | Steeple built |
| 1731 | Obelisk completed by Lady Day, followed by fluting |
| 1733 | Parish formally created out of St Giles Cripplegate. First baptism in church said to have been on 4 September, and first vestry meeting 23 September. Church consecrated on 18 October (St Luke's Day) by Dr Hare, of St Paul's Cathedral and Bishop of Chichester |
| 1734 | Organ presented by Mr Buckley, a brewer of Old Street |
| by 1740 | Crypt in use for burials |
| 1745 | Rocque map, shows church with burial grounds and vestry building |
| c.1750 | Engraving of church |
| 1755 | Strype's map of parish |
| 1759 | Building of Norman Buildings and Norman Row |
| 1766 | Caslon buried at St Luke's |
| 1810 | Last official use of wood coffins in crypt |
| 1813 | Horwood map. No substantive change from Rocque, other than extension of building in parish |
| 1829 | Interior and exterior works |
| 1833 | Thomas Allen, London historian, buried at St Luke's |
| 1843 | Plan of Ironmongers' Estate. Organ enlarged by Gray & Davison; said to be first church organ with tremulant, and first use in England of swell, sub- and super-octaves |
| 1844-1864 | Henry Smart as organist (then moved to St Pancras) |
| 1852 | Interior works - possible date for insertion of east-end glass by Clutterbuck. Churchyard railings replaced |
| 1853 | Burials ceased in graveyard and crypt. (Almost all London burial grounds were closed between 1853 and 1855.) |

1862-1863 Further work to organ: addition of pedal reed, then completely rebuilt by Willis under the direction of John Stainer

1869 Exterior repairs (recorded by tablet on front of building)

1871 Ordnance Survey 1:2500; toilet block shown in outline on vestry

1877-1878 Church restored by Arthur Blomfield at cost of £7,000; northern churchyard converted to park (but maintained by Vestry); rectory altered and considerably enlarged.

Blomfield's stated principles of church design included:

- the need for auditorium and ritual convenience, and use of a pulpit sounding-board
- raising the altar to ensure that it was conspicuous
- use of stone for reredos
- architectural indication of font and architectural treatment of reading desk

1882-1884 Metropolitan Public Gardens Association formed, and act passed to prevent building on disused burial grounds

1894 Ordnance Survey 1:2500. Rectory shown as rebuilt and extended

1895 Parish map. Graveyard around church noted as closed, and described as filled with rubbish

1904-1905 Priestly and Wenlake Houses built by L.C.C. to southwest of Rectory, opening view to west end of church

1914 Ordnance Survey 1:2500. LCC Blocks built; Ironmonger Row houses cleared

Inter-war Additional LCC flats added alongside Priestly/Wenlake Houses; public baths and washouses built in Ironmonger Row (1931); swimming pool added to baths (1938)

1959 Church closed

1960 Church gutted and roof removed; reredos and altar rails to northwest chapel of St Andrew Holborn; organ to St Giles Cripplegate

1964 Crypt coffins covered with spoil and access points bricked up

1964-1994 Crypt vandalised at various dates

1969 Start of building of GLC estates to east and west of Bath Street

1972 Slates still stacked in churchyard. Finsbury Leisure Centre begun (completed 1975)

1988 Baths interior refurbished

1994 New scheme prepared to re-use church and clear churchyard

1996-1997 Graveyard relandscaped and opened to public

# 7.0 ECOLOGICAL SURVEY

**Date of Survey: 1.7.1999, by Dr. J.I. Bryatt B.A., B.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S.**
**Botanical and Ecological Consultant**

## 7.1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises 2 main areas:

### 7.1.1. Inside the derelict walls of St. Luke's Church

This area is roofless but has been made inaccessible to all except flying organisms.

The habitats present are:

a) **A large open space on the floor of the building** which has been colonised over a period of about 30 years to support a varied vegetation of herbaceous plants and young trees, mostly around 1m high. These plants are listed in the Appendix and do not include any plants of great interest or local scarcity. A few moths were seen in the herbage including the small Magpie, **Eurrhypara hortulata**.

b) **The walls of the building**. These support a variety of common plants including **Buddeia davidii** growing on some of the higher ledges formed by window sills etc. However, low down in a sheltered niche in the sw (North facing) corner of the wall three species of fern were growing in the lime mortar of the old brickwork. These are now of relative scarcity in the area. and are as follows:

i) **Asplenium adiantum - nigrum** – Black spleenwort. Only very young plants were present making identification slightly uncertain.

ii) **Asplenium trichomanes** – Maidenhair spleenwort. 3 well-grown specimens present. This is much the scarcer of the plants present on the site. It is only recorded from 3 tetrads (2km sq) in the eight centrads (10km sq) adjoining centrad 38, in which St. Luke's is situated.

iii) **Phyllitis scolopendrium** – Hart's Tongue. Quite a number of young specimens present – no leaves more than C.15 cm. This plant is still relatively widespread in the area.

Some of the more protected walls in the remains of the Church Tower are providing nesting sites for a colony of pigeons. There were no signs of Swallows or Martins.

### 7.1.2. Remaining area outside the Church Walls – part of the old graveyard

This contained:

a) **Grass**. This was close-mown and apparently reseeded, not a remnant of original meadow. Only common weeds such as Plantain present, of no ecological interest.

b) **Tabletombs**. These did not support any significant vegetation.

c) **Trees**. Rows of mature London Planes – **Platanus hybrida** are present along the margins of the site, i.e. to the North, East and West, those to the East and West continuing into the area to the South of the proposed development.

There is also one very old but rather stunted Horse Chestnut – **Aesculus hippocastanum** at the North end of the site. It was not possible to deter mine if it is a pink flowering specimen which can be important for bees.

d) **Shrubbery**. This is present in front of the Church on both East and West margins where it continues into the part of the site which will not be affected by the development (except as access).

This comprises mainly evergreen shrubs such as Portugal Laurel – **Prunus lusitanica** but also some deciduous plants, the only native species present being:

i) **Acer campestre** – Field Maple. Several plants present, possibly planted.

ii) **Fraxinus excelsior** – Ash. Young plants, no more than 2m, probably natural seedings.

iii) **Rosa canina** – Dog Rose. Only one seen.

This shrubbery is giving useful cover for birds. (1 Blackbird seen).

## 7.2. EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

7.2.1 The proposed development will entail the removal of all the habitats with in the Church Walls.

7.2.2 It will also entail disturbance and removal to parts of the areas to front and rear.

7.2.3 The lopping of the poplars on the East side of the building (and West?).

## 7.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION

### 7.3.1 Ferns on the inner Church Wall

Rodney Burton of the London Natural History Society was consulted and his opinion is that little can be done to save these. An attempt should be made for the ferns to be removed and resited in the grounds at the rear in a similar shady and sheltered position.

### 7.3.2 Areas outside the Church building

The existing shrubbery may not be affected. If it is, I would suggest replacement and/or additional planting of native species of shrubs able to cope with the urban environment.

These could include Buddleia (only present now on the Church walls). This is attractive to butterflies and humans and also provides insect food for birds. Also Field Maple and Dog Roses as these are already present and Cotoreaster species.

Perhaps some of these plants could also be introduced at the rear of the Church where no shrubbery is now present. The Horse Chestnut might also be replaced, preferably by a pink flowering specimen. Yew and Mountain Ash are other trees that could be planted.

## 7.4. CONCLUSION

Although it is always regrettable to remove existing vegetation especially in urban areas, fortunately there is little here that has scarcity value. The habitats within the Church itself are only of recent origin and disturbance to areas outside will not destroy original vegetation. It should be possible to compensate for inevitable losses by replacement and enhancement when the site is reinstated.

The constructive use of the presently derelict building should outweigh any ecological considerations here.

Ref: Flora of the London Area. Rodney M. Burton 1983
London Natural History Society. ISBN 0 901009 02 4.

## 7.5 LIST OF FERNS AND FLOWERING PLANTS PRESENT

| | Area 1 in Church | Area 2 Outside | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asplenium adiantum - nigrum | ✓ | | Black Spleenwort | Salix Caprea | ✓ | | Goat Willow |
| A. trichomanes | ✓ | | Maidenhair Speenwort | Sambucus nigra | ✓ | ✓ | Elder |
| Dryopteris felix-mas | ✓ | | Male fern | Seuecio squalidus | ✓ | ✓ | Oxford Ragwort |
| Phyllitis scolopendrium | ✓ | | Hart's Tongue | Sisymbrium officinale | | ✓ | Hedge Mustard |
| Pteridium aquilirum | ✓ | | Bracken | Solanum dulcamara | ✓ | | Woody Nightshade |
| | | | | Sonchus oleraceus | ✓ | | Sow Thistle |
| Acer campestre | | ✓ | Field Maple | Sorbus aucuparia | ✓ | | Mountain Ash |
| Aesulus hippocastarium | | ✓ | Horse Chestnut | Stellaria media | | ✓ | Chickweed |
| Agrostis stolonifera | ✓ | | Creeping Bent | Trifolium repens | ✓ | | White Clover |
| Artemisia vulgaris | ✓ | | Mugwort | Tussilago farfara | ✓ | | Coltsfoot |
| Buddleia davidii | ✓ | | Buddleia | Urtica dioica | ✓ | | Stinging Nettle |
| Cirsium arvense | ✓ | | Creeping Thistle | | | | |
| C. vulgane | ✓ | | Spear Thistle | | | | |
| Conyza canadensis | ✓ | ✓ | Canadia Fleabane | | | | |
| Cotoneaster sp. | ✓ | | Cotoneaster | | | | |
| Crepin Vesicaria | ✓ | | Hawksbeard | | | | |
| Dactylis glomerata | ✓ | | Coda's - foot grass | | | | |
| Epilobium adenocaulon | ✓ | | Willow Herb | | | | |
| E. hirsutium | ✓ | | Great Willow Herb | | | | |
| Euphorlia peplus | | ✓ | Petty Spurge | | | | |
| Festuca rubra | ✓ | | Red fescue grass | | | | |
| Fraximus excelsoir | | ✓ | Ash | | | | |
| Glaium aparine | | | Hedge Bedstraw | | | | |
| Geranium robertianium | ✓ | | Herb Robert | | | | |
| Hedera helix | | ✓ | Ivy | | | | |
| Holcus lanatius | ✓ | | Yorkshire Fog grass | | | | |
| Lapsana communis | | ✓ | Nipplewort | | | | |
| Mercunalis percrius | ✓ | | Annual Dog's Mercury | | | | |
| Plantanus hybrida | | ✓ | London Plane | | | | |
| Pruncella vulgaris | | ✓ | Self-heal | | | | |
| Reseda luteola | ✓ | | Dyer's Greenweed | | | | |
| Rubus sp. | ✓ | | Bramble | | | | |
| Rumex obtusifolius | ✓ | | Broad-leaved Dock | | | | |

# 8.0 ILLUSTRATIONS, REFERENCES, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 8.1 ILLUSTRATIONS



## 8.2 REFERENCES

All supporting documents appended to HLF grant application and other secondary sources.

## 8.3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS


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